



To: Green Mountain Imperative Participants
From: Let's Grow Kids Campaign
Date: October 30, 2014
Subject: Pre-summit reading materials.

As a sponsor of this important event, we look forward to contributing to constructive conversations and developing solutions for Vermont's public education system.

We are providing participants of the Green Mountain Imperative with two links to preparatory materials for the summit. The first link is to a [Ted Talk](#) on early childhood development by Dr. Jack Shonkoff of Harvard University. The second is a [short article](#) on the science of early childhood development.

The systems that our children access have become increasingly important for their healthy development and future success as times have changed and the vast majority of parents of children under twelve are in the workforce. This includes early care and education, public education (pk-12), afterschool programming, and higher education. These systems are also the transitions that make up the trajectory of children's lives. Each stage both relies and builds on the success of the previous.

In Vermont, we've indicated our intention to minimize and support children through these transitions by defining early childhood as birth through eight, by passing universal pre-k, and by increasing dual enrollment, allowing high school students to access higher education as part of the public school system. Developing a seamless continuum of experience is particularly important for children birth through eight because a growing body of research has revealed the critical importance of high quality early learning and development programs to later achievement and learning. When children enter into kindergarten unprepared, as 40-50% do now in Vermont, this makes success in public education and beyond; including higher education and the workforce, less likely.

As we embark on a conversation about education reform, we believe it is important that we are considering public education in its greater context. We hope that these selections will help to remind us that any reform must contemplate and interface with the full continuum of childhood. We are looking forward to a great event and to constructive conversation about the future of public education in Vermont.

Dr. Shonkoff's Ted Talk:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtd_t5iqRqE

"The Science of Early Childhood Development"
http://developingchild.harvard.edu/index.php/resources/briefs/inbrief_series/inbrief_the_science_of_ecd/